

Substantive Site Plan Approval Application

Supplemental Report to the Design Review Committee

January 21, 2014

Dear Committee Members,

Please accept this supplemental report and its attachments as our follow up, in response to our meeting of January 9th. I truthfully enjoyed the discussion during the meeting and appreciated everyone's thoughtful consideration.

Upon reflection, I found it enlightening that all the questions and comments that were raised during the meeting, were all questions we had asked of ourselves throughout the course of design. I find this encouraging since it suggests that collectively, we are asking the right questions. As you may appreciate, we have dedicated much time in determining what we consider to be the right answers to those and many other questions. We respect that we may not always fully agree on the answer to every question, however we are confident that we have made decisions that find the appropriate balance between fulfilling the development opportunity while advancing good urban design, heritage conservation & integration, public benefit, downtown revitalization and appropriate architectural expression. I left the Design Review Committee meeting encouraged that its members understood and appreciated our sincere desire to create a development that will ultimately contribute to our city.

We have determined a number of key points as a result of our meeting. In advance of our next meeting, we feel it would be helpful to provide the committee with our response to each. Those key points include:

- Provision of a landscape plan
- Consideration of extent of canopies
- Provision of pedestrian views to illustrate street level design and urban conditions
- Hotel design in consideration of proximity to Bank of Commerce building
- Overall complexity of the design
- Exterior lighting design

1.0 Landscape Plan

Please refer to the attached landscape and plaza drawings, (*Ref. A-108 and A-109 Revised*) which illustrate detailed designs including grade conditions, materials and features.

2.0 Canopies

The proposed design includes canopies at each of the main entrances, which include the hotel along George Street, condos along Granville Street, and office along Duke Street. The hotel canopy extends over the south plaza creating a weather protected area for pedestrians and guests. The three condo canopies extend over the sidewalk as they project outward from the wall openings, while consolidating into a single canopy within the arcade. The office canopy extends over the sidewalk and provides a weather protected entrance for tenants and visitors.

Within the heritage facades, retail entrances are recessed thus providing weather protection at doorways.

The By-Laws and Design Manual do not specify any requirement for canopies other than to provide recommendations for integration of canopies within heritage facades. It is our suggestion that the use of

canopies as proposed is sufficient in terms of providing adequate weather protection at appropriate locations while also accentuating major entrances within the development.

We would not recommend the introduction of canopies at the heritage facades as they did not originally exist. To introduce them would result in an inconsistent canopy expression and size due to each heritage building having its own unique size and proportions at windows and entrances.

3.0 Pedestrian Views

As per the request of the committee, we are pleased to provide the following series of vignettes (*Refer to the eleven renderings at the end of this report*). They are each taken at pedestrian level and illustrate how the development will be experienced and viewed as one might travel around the property. Each view is taken so that in combination, a complete tour of the development is provided. It is our intention to illustrate that the pedestrian and urban scale of the development has been carefully considered within the design. This includes the scale and proportion of building facades and outdoor spaces; relationships of heritage buildings to new infills; creation of public spaces & amenities; use of materials; location of entrances; location of retail storefronts; location and design of canopies; rhythm; scale; proportion; articulation; solid vs. transparent; and variety.

4.0 Hotel Design

It was expressed by certain Committee members that the design of the hotel might be too expressive given its proximity to the Bank of Commerce building. It is the intention of the proposed design to create a dialogue between the two built forms as a way of expressing their unique architectural qualities. The development, in accordance with the Design Manual (ref: 4.4.1) provides setbacks against each side of the Bank of Commerce building. Along George Street, the setback is provided via the atrium located between the Bank of Commerce building and the ribbon wall. The ribbon wall provides a quiet backdrop against the Bank of Commerce building and provides additional separation to the hotel, whose articulated facade is additionally setback from the ribbon wall. This layered setback creates sufficient space between the forms so as to allow a respectful and ideological dialogue to occur. Each form has its own unique articulation that is specific to its time, place and purpose.

5.0 Variety of Design

It was further expressed by certain Committee members that the design may be too “busy” or that there is too much variety within the architectural expression. It is the intention of the design to provide the appropriate amount of variety, expression and identity, first to the development as a whole and secondly to the major components within the development. These include the heritage resources, streetwall infills (retail), atrium, ribbon wall, hotel, condo and office towers.

Overall, the south and north towers share a similar curtainwall design with only a modest differentiation in order to respond to their specific requirements (floor layouts, floor to floor heights, balconies, etc). This curtainwall design is used consistently above the streetwall on both towers with the exception of the hotel. The hotel’s design provides it with its own identity while also responding to the unique opportunity to incorporate photovoltaic panels on the south façade, which has unimpeded sun exposure due to location of Province House across the street. The infill facades between the heritage resources are designed as minimal granite and glass

compositions so as not to compete but instead to accentuate the heritage facades.

The design has been carefully edited to provide consistency and variety. Variety is essential given the scale of developing an entire city block. Nowhere in Halifax is a city block comprised of a homogenous expression but instead is comprised of several buildings, often with their own distinct identities – this is part of Halifax's charm and identity. Notable exceptions include Scotia Square, Metro Centre and Maritime Centre, each of which are considered to be examples of how not to design large, comprehensive developments. This is in part, due to their brutal homogenous expression, lack of compositional variation and inconsiderate use of scale within the context of downtown Halifax. Variety is an essential part of the urban condition and the design incorporates variety in a controlled and deliberate manner that is considered to be appropriate for Halifax, for its immediate surroundings and for its functional purposes.

6.0 Exterior Lighting

The night-time illumination of the development is intended to accord with section 3.5.4 of the Design Manual. Lighting shall be designed in regard to three key issues:

- The safety and security of pedestrians, cyclists and other road users as required.
- The enhancement of the pedestrian experience at street level.
- The enhancement of the presence of the development within the context of Downtown Halifax.
- The need to minimize the impact of lighting and its related energy usage on the environment. The LEED-CS 'Light pollution avoidance' credit is being pursued and the standards set therein shall be adhered to.

All lighting will be LED so as to minimize energy use while providing longevity and proper colour rendition.

The lighting design intent is as follows:

Lighting design at sidewalk level and to street frontages:

Generally, lighting will be provided to enhance the pedestrian experience, for reasons of safety and ambiance, above and beyond HRM street lighting. Light sources are to be building mounted and will be shielded to not create glare for road users. Light fixtures will be mounted at an appropriate height relative to sidewalk levels to accentuate the building facades while also illuminating the pedestrian areas.

Lighting design at main entrances, canopies and plazas:

Lighting at the main entrances (hotel, office and condo) will be designed to illuminate the entrances adequately for their intended purpose while enhancing their legibility relative to their surroundings. Lighting will be integrated into the underside of canopies to ensure proper illumination levels and to enhance the architectural design.

At the two main plazas, lighting will overspill from within the Atrium onto the plazas. Additional exterior lighting will be integrated into the plaza design to enhance the legibility and use of the plazas while ensuring safety. Lighting will be a combination of flush mounted lights within the plaza surface as well as wall mounted lights. In addition, steps and ramps will be lit adequately by recessed mounted low level light sources

denoting changes in grade. Reflecting pools will be illuminated at all times. All lighting accessible at grade will be designed as vandal resistant, not readily accessible and durable against the impact of snow plowing, salt and rain.

Lighting design at vehicular access points:

Pedestrian safety is the foremost consideration in the design of lighting at vehicular access points that will be in use at all times of the day and night. Lighting will be located to provide adequate illumination of sidewalks, avoiding glare and blind spots that may cause a driver not to see a pedestrian. The use of small warning lights that activate when a vehicle is accessing or leaving the parking ramps or loading docks may be considered; activated by the operation of the overhead doors. The recessed area located at the entrance/exit to the parking garage will include soffit lighting to maintain light levels within this space.

Building accent lighting:

In general, lighting will only be introduced on the building in order to accentuate certain architectural features. The predominant feature of the development will be the ribbon wall. The intention is to illuminate the underside of the overhang above the Bank of Commerce building so as to highlight the dramatic effect of the cantilever. As well, lighting will illuminate those portions of the ribbon where it changes in direction; where the ribbon mediates between major portions of the building's composition; and where it extends between the towers at the roof level.

Lighting will be provided at the condo balconies and will either be wall mounted or within the underside of the balcony directly above.

Accent lighting design for heritage facades:

Two forms of lighting are proposed. One is to provide pedestrian level lighting by way of wall mounted fixtures as mentioned previously. These fixtures will include an up-light functionality that will illuminate the pilasters between windows. In addition, it is the intention to provide subtle accent lighting to highlight the depth and ornate decoration of the facades. Lighting will comprise of simple white LED lighting at select pilasters, underside of capitals and along cornices; all sources being concealed. Of special consideration will be the Bank of Commerce Building and Merchant Bank of Canada Building, which have the most prominence in terms of architectural features.

Yours truly,

signed by

Eugene Pieczonka FRAIC NSAA AANB AAPEI NLAA LEED AP
Principal

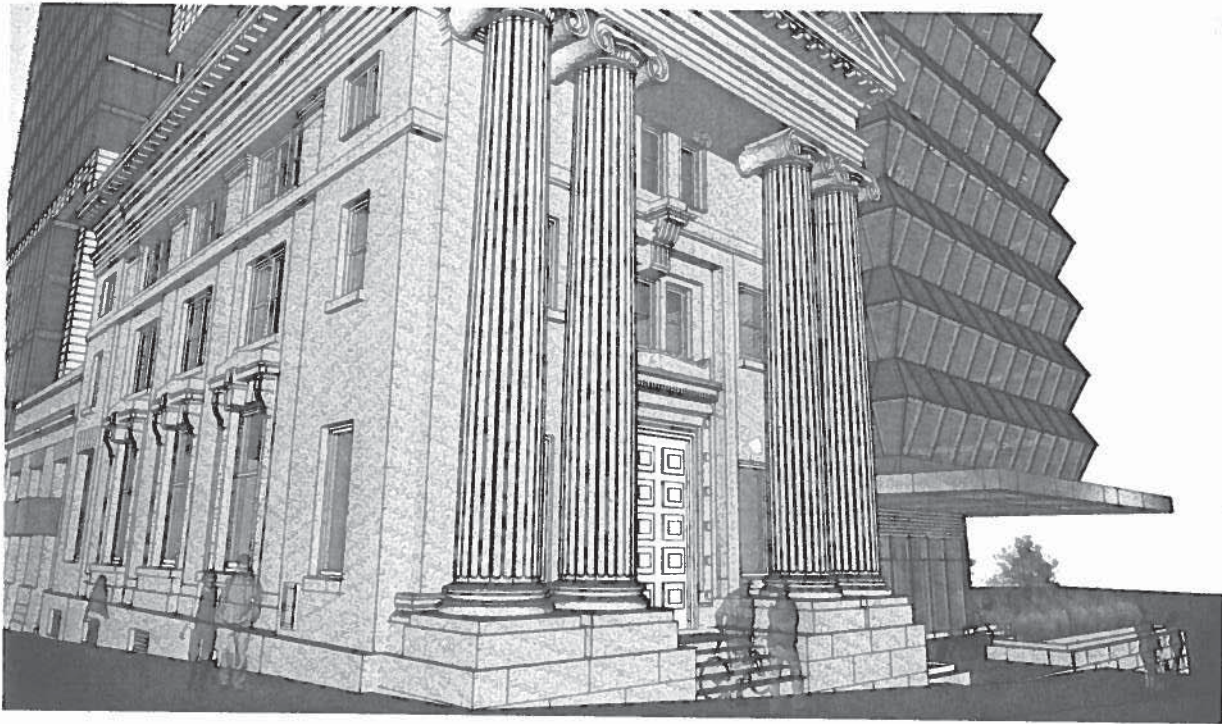


Fig.1 The Conserved Bank of Commerce Building with hotel plaza beyond.

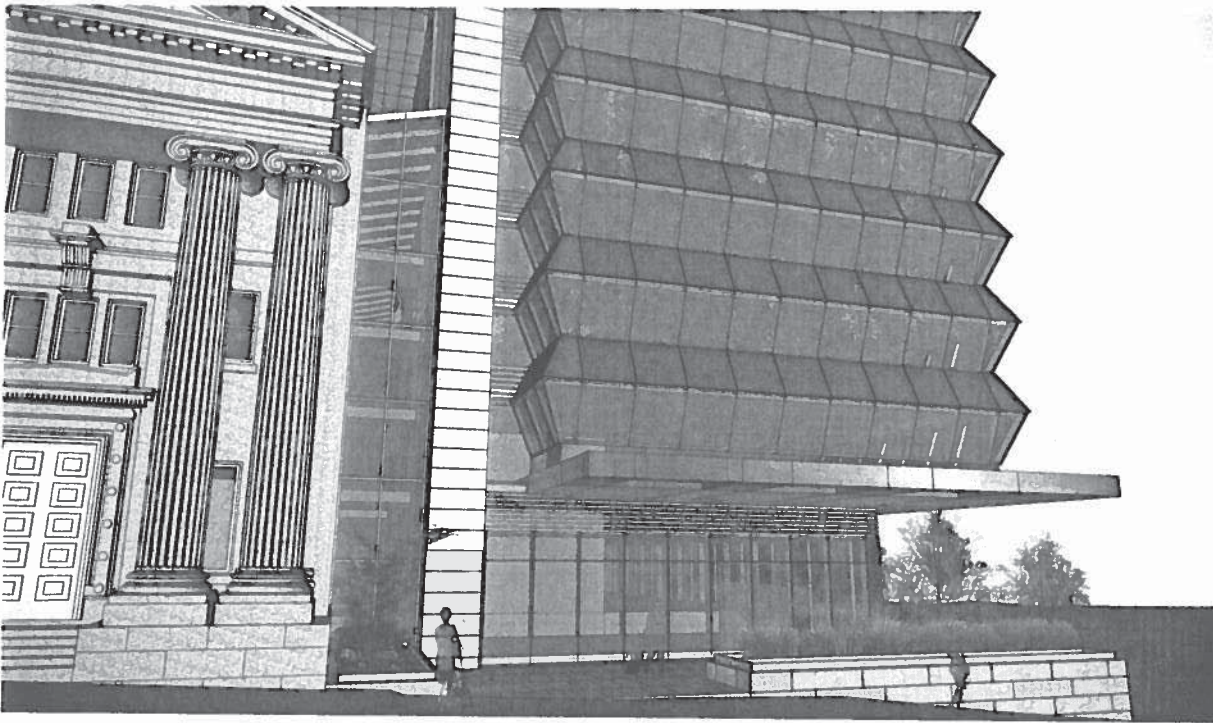


Fig.2 George Street facade of the conserved Bank of Commerce Building, atrium and hotel plaza.

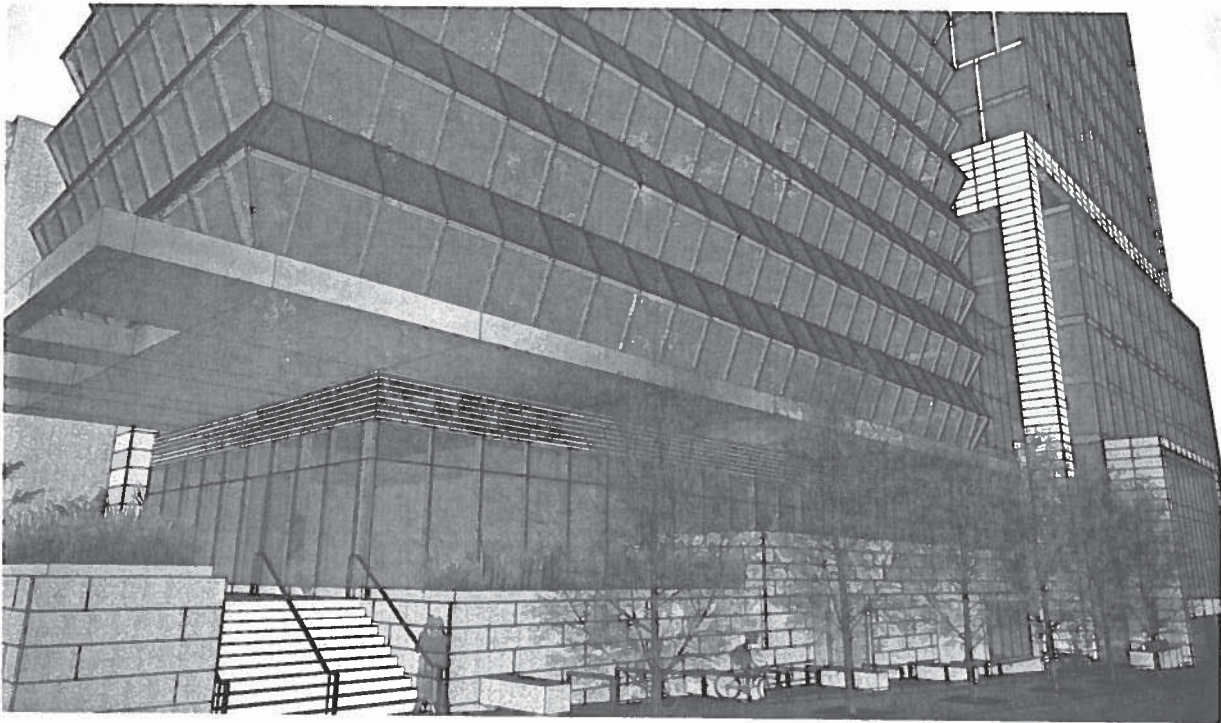


Fig.3 Hollis Street facade of the hotel, hotel plaza, terraces and widened sidewalk.

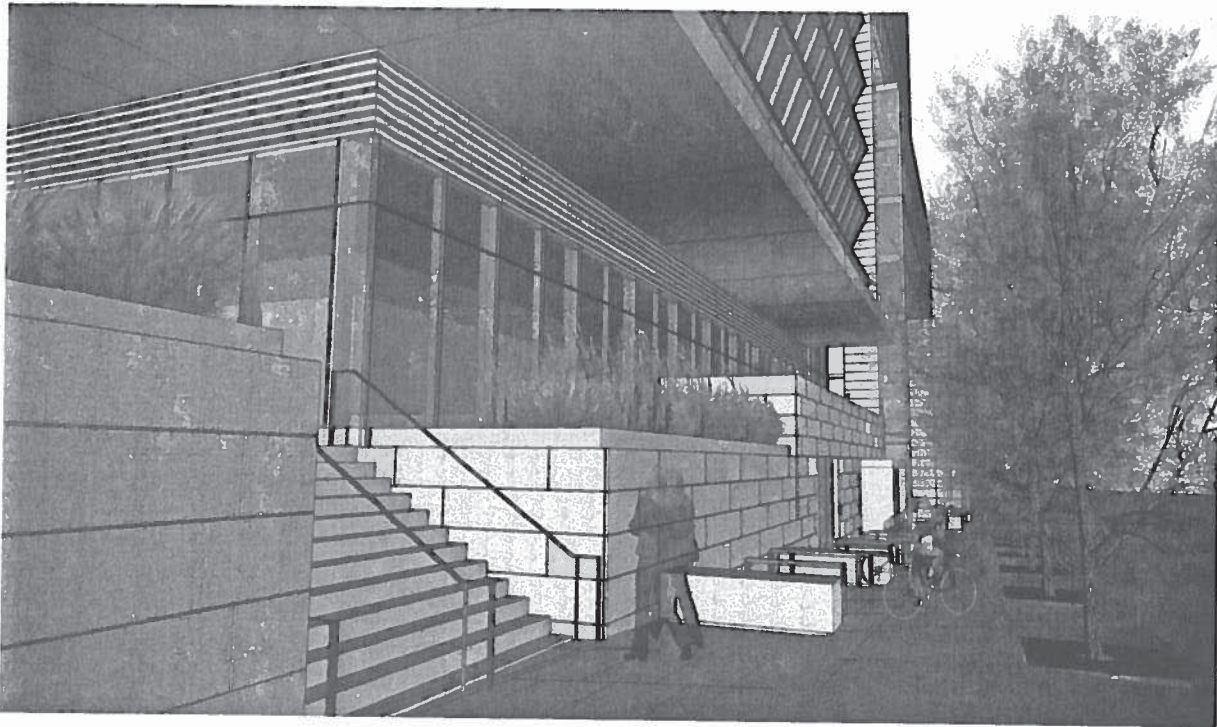


Fig.4 Hollis Street facade of the hotel and widened sidewalk.

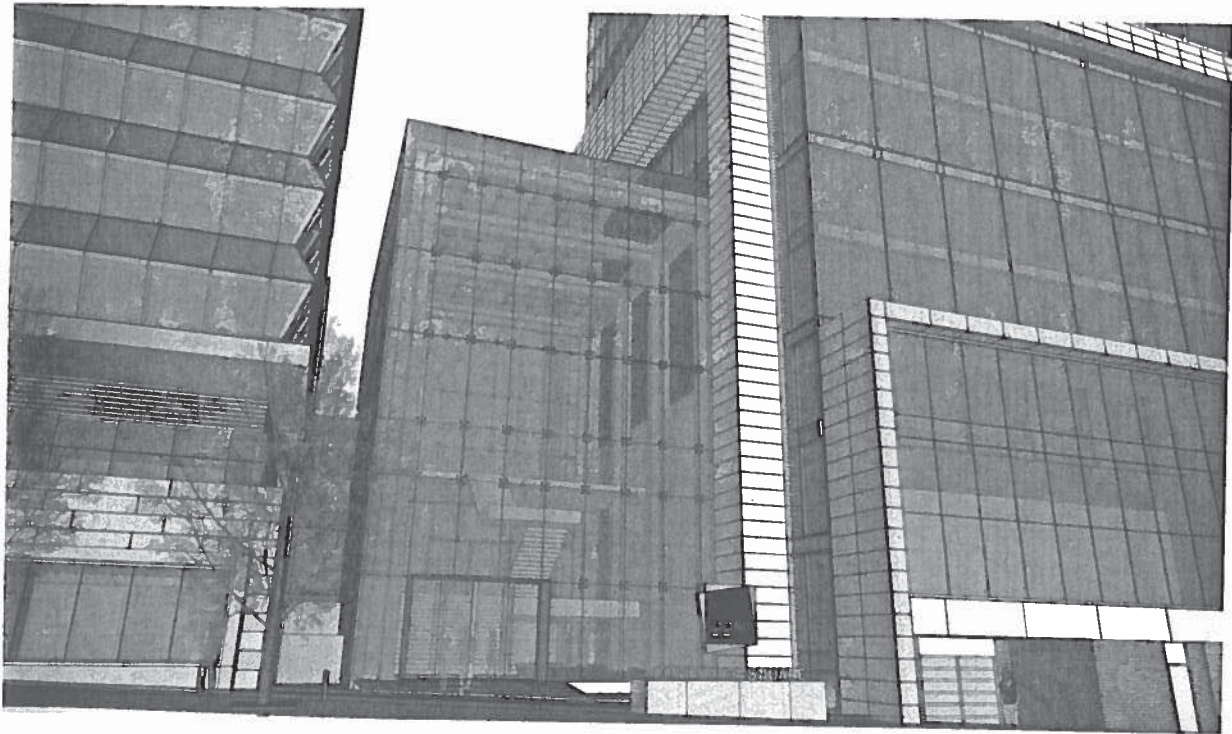


Fig.5 Hollis Street facade of the atrium and east plaza.

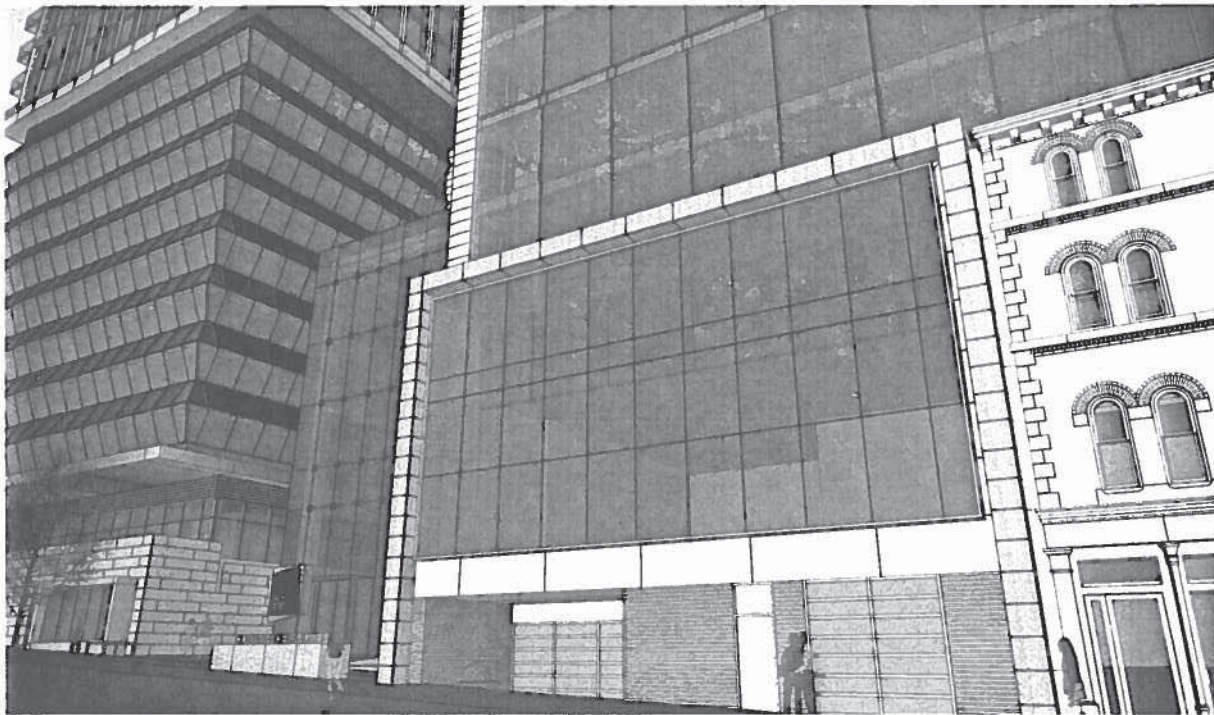


Fig.6 The east plaza and car park entrance.



Fig.7 The conserved Champlain and Flynn Buildings.



Fig.8 The conserved Merchant Bank and Champlain Buildings, and the Duke Street Office Tower entrance.

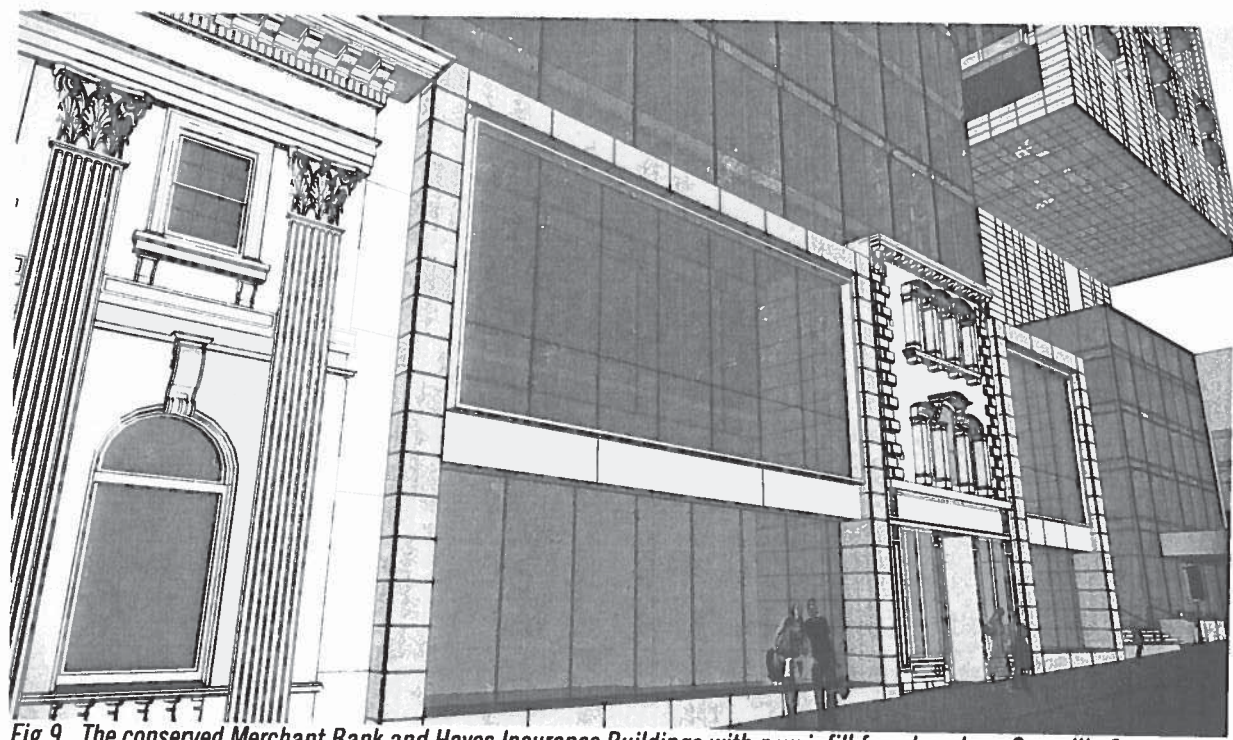


Fig.9 The conserved Merchant Bank and Hayes Insurance Buildings with new infill facades along Granville Street.



Fig.10 The west plaza and condominium entrance.

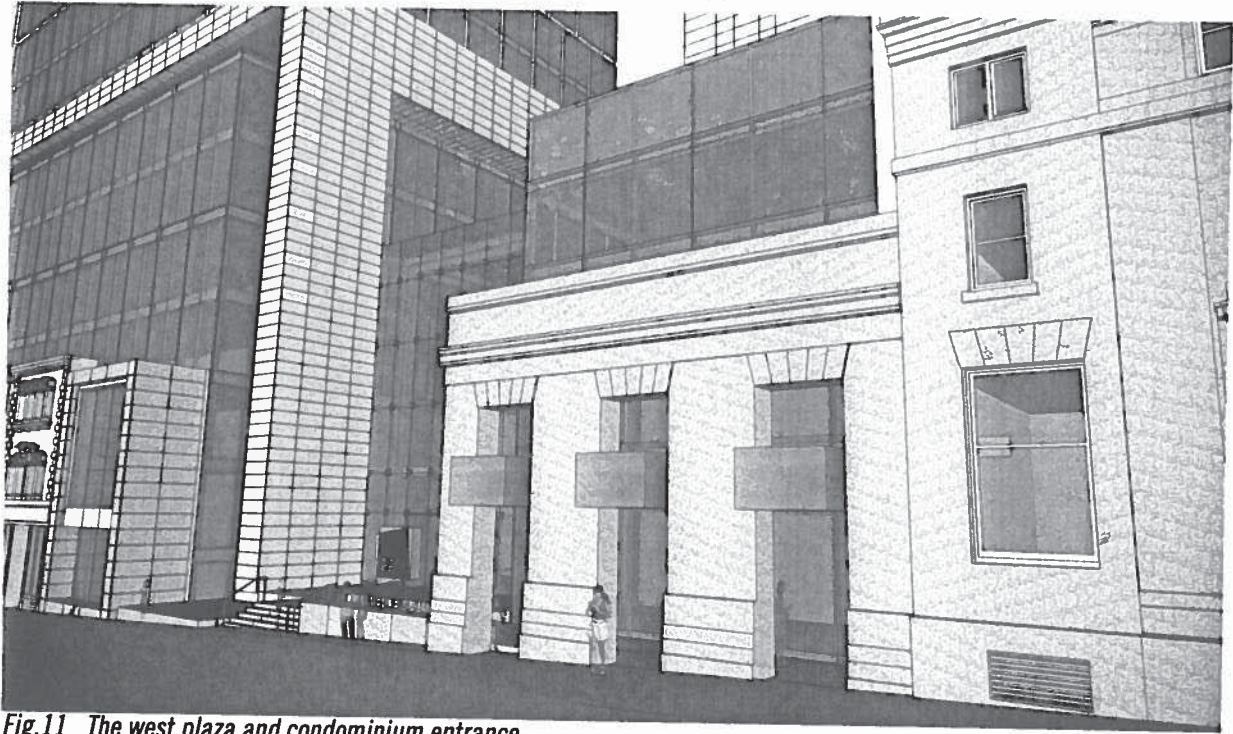


Fig.11 The west plaza and condominium entrance.